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## The Return

Malachi 3:6-10; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8  
Ray Cortese, February 20 & 21, 2015

### Step 1: Reflect on the Text

Why do we do this first? We always want to start with the Bible. The goal is to meditate on the Word and read it with an ear sensitive to the Holy Spirit's promptings. Look for words or phrases that stand out through logic, repetition, layout, etc.

-  Read Malachi 3:6-10 and 2 Corinthians 9:6-8. What stood out to you? What did you find interesting and/or important? What was challenging or caused you to have questions?

### Step 2: Reflect on the Sermon

#### INTRODUCTION

- 1 How would you describe the difference between what Jesus called the “broad road” and the “narrow road”? What was your takeaway from the Jim Carey clip?
- 2 What was your one big/main takeaway from the service? If someone had arrived as everyone was leaving, and they stopped you in the parking lot and asked, “What was the sermon about?” what would you have said?

#### THE RETURN: STOP ROBBING THE OWNER

- 3 Do you believe that everything in the world belongs to God, and everything you have is a gift from God? How would believing that simple truth change your life?
- 4 Why do you think we are oblivious to our robbery of God? What makes us blind to our own materialism? How might you diagnose whether or not you are greedy?

## THE RETURN: BRING THE WHOLE TITHE

- 5 Ray said, “A staggering number of people at Seven Rivers don’t tithe.” Do you? What excuses do people make to justify not tithing? Is tithing insane?
- 6 Ray said, “We don’t worship money, but follow the money trail and it will lead you to what we worship.” Where does your money trail lead? What do you worship?

## THE RETURN: EXPERIENCE THE BIG GIVER

- 7 God says through Malachi, “Put me to the test, and see whether I will not open the windows of heaven and pour down a blessing for you until there is no more need.” Have you ever put God to the test in the area of giving? Have you ever experienced his blessing because you stepped out in faith?
- 8 What was the point of the video about the little boy who gave \$20 to a soldier? How do we ultimately become generous followers of Christ?

## Step 3: Final Reflections

- ✠ How has your understanding, appreciation, and love for Jesus and the gospel grown as a result of this study?
- ♥ In what areas of faith and practice are you feeling convicted by the Holy Spirit to act as a result of this study?